

Appl. No. 09/807,968
Amendment dated Jan.28, 2004
Reply to Office Action of Nov.25, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-20 (canceled).

21 (new). A shear bolt coupling assembly comprising:

a first coupling member with a first radially extending flange having a planar inside face, an opposed outside face and a plurality of radially extending open-ended slots along a perimeter thereof;

a second coupling member with a second radially extending flange having a planar inside face, and an opposed outside face and a plurality of radially extending open-ended slots along a perimeter thereof, wherein said first and second coupling members are coaxially engaged so as to position said inside faces in a facing relationship;

an elongate shear bolt having a first portion forming a shear area of a given shear strength, a second portion on each side of said first portion forming a shoulder of larger diameter than said first portion for flush engagement with said planar inside face of each of said first and second flanges, and a third portion extending from each of said shoulders adapted to receive a fastening assembly to secure said shear bolt in an aligned pair of said slots in said first and second flanges and thereby securely connect said first and second coupling members for transferring a shear force therebetween up to said given shear strength, said fastening assembly including a stop means for preventing said shear bolt from being urged radially out of said aligned slots by centrifugal force.

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22 (new). The assembly of claim 21 wherein said stop means comprises a washer element adapted to register with a recessed portion in a respective outside face of said first or second flange.

23 (new). The assembly of claim 21 wherein said shear area is formed by said first portion of said shear bolt having a turned down profile.

24 (new). The assembly of claim 22 wherein said shear area is formed by said first portion of said shear bolt having a turned down profile.

25 (new). The assembly of claims 21 or 23 wherein said third portion of said shear bolt includes opposed planar surfaces adjacent said second portion for slideably engaging any one of said slots in a close clearance fit to avoid rotation of said shear bolt therein.

26 (new). The assembly of claim 25 further including a washer element having an opening for insertion onto said third portion of said shear bolt and adapted to register with a recessed portion in a respective outside face of said first or second flange, wherein the location of said opening in said washer element provides a means of adjusting the radial spacing of said shear bolt from a given radial reference point of said first and second coupling members.

27 (new). The assembly of claims 22 or 24 wherein said third portion of said shear bolt includes opposed planar surfaces adjacent said second portion for slideably engaging any one of said slots in a close clearance fit to avoid rotation of said shear bolt therein.

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28 (new). The assembly of claim 27 wherein said washer element further includes an opening for insertion onto said third portion, the location of said opening in said washer element providing a means of adjusting the radial spacing of said shear bolt from a given radial reference point of said first and second coupling members.

29 (new). The assembly of claims 21 or 23 further including a washer element having an opening for insertion onto said third portion of said shear bolt and adapted to register with a recessed portion in a respective outside face of said first or second flange, wherein the location of said opening in said washer element provides a means of adjusting the radial spacing of said shear bolt from a given radial reference point of said first and second coupling members.

30 (new). The assembly of claims 22 or 24 wherein said washer element further includes an opening for insertion onto said third portion of said shear bolt, the location of said opening in said washer element providing a means of adjusting the radial spacing of said shear bolt from a given radial reference point of said first and second coupling members.